

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended): A wafer carrier for supporting a substrate, comprising:

a circular plate having a flat edge region extending around the circumference of said plate, said flat edge region having a width of approximately 5 to 25 mm; and

a circular recessed center region having a recessed bottom surface and including an upwardly inclined surface around the periphery of said recessed bottom surface,

wherein the substrate is supported by a portion of the upwardly inclined surface and is spaced apart from said recessed bottom surface, and the upwardly inclined surface is inclined at an angle in the range of approximately 5 to 45 degrees to the plane of the recessed bottom surface such that the substrate is supported by said wafer carrier only around a peripheral edge of the substrate and a backside of the substrate does not contact the recessed bottom surface, and

wherein said wafer carrier is comprised substantially of a material selected from the group of silicon carbide, aluminum nitride, large-grained polycrystalline silicon and silicon/silicon carbide alloy which enables the upwardly inclined surface to maintain continuous contact substantially entirely around the peripheral edge of the substrate during processing at elevated temperatures such that deposition on the backside of the substrate is substantially prevented.

Claim 2 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein said recessed bottom surface further comprises at least one aperture formed therein for receiving at least one support member to engage the substrate.

Claim 3 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein said circular recessed center region has a diameter of approximately 200 mm.

Claim 4 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein said circular recessed center region has a diameter of approximately 300 mm.

Claim 5 (canceled)

Claim 6 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein said upwardly inclined surface is inclined at an angle of approximately 10° to the plane of the bottom recessed surface.

Claim 7 (canceled)

Claim 8 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein said wafer carrier is comprised of a material having thermal conductivity in the range of 40 to 70 W/m/K.

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Claim 9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein the wafer is spaced apart from said recessed bottom surface by a distance of approximately 0.15 to 0.5 mm.

Claim 11 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein the wafer is spaced apart from said recessed bottom surface by a distance of approximately 0.25 mm.

Claim 12 (canceled)

Claims 13-23 (withdrawn)

Claims 24-28 (canceled)
